

## HAMILTON DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

### Minutes

April 16, 2014

**Welcome** – At 7:30 AM, B. Stein opened the meeting of the Hamilton Development Corporation. Board members Anthony Nickas, Bill Gisness, David Carey and Rick Mitchell were present. Also present were residents Bob and Barbara Lawrence, Mr. McRae and Elaine Apple. Planning Coordinator, Kristine Cheetham, was also present.

### Agenda Items

**Willow Street Property** - B. Stein opened the topic by informing the Board that the Title V inspection of the residential property was successfully completed. He added that the closing date was moved to May 1, 2014. A letter from the HDC attorney listed many items needed for the closing. Each member of the Board agreed to take part in the preparation of documents for the closing.

- A. Nickas – Insurance
- B. Stein – Lease Agreements
- C. Gisness – Property Manager
- D. Mitchell – Press Release & Outreach Plan
- E. Carey – Agreed to assist as a reviewer for the different elements.

R. Mitchell asked if the Board could take a few minutes to recognize Bob McRae and to thank him for working with the HDC to secure the future use of his property downtown. Mr. McRae had a few questions of the Board. He wanted to be sure that nothing would happen or change on the property as long as he was residing there. He also questioned how the billing would work as well as site maintenance.

The HDC assured him that the information would be in writing as soon as possible. The Board discussed leaving up the Mac Shoe sign on the building.

Elaine Apple, a resident of the downtown, asked the HDC if there would be a planning process for the re-use of this site. She would like to be included and had a few concerns about things she heard for the site. B. Gisness encouraged her to continue to participate as the HDC begins to plan for the re-use of the site. He also noted that the planning was the intention behind the purchase of the site. D. Carey asked her directly if she felt better that the HDC was leading the process or a private developer. She noted that both were a planning process with unknowns at

this time. B. Stein added that the planning process involves zoning changes for the downtown and hopefully an architectural review process. He did not envision a large structure at the site. E. Apple also added that it is not up to the government to select businesses – it is a function of the local economy. D. Carey brought the discussion back to the mission of the HDC which is one of infrastructure that supports the local business economy. He would like to see a vibrant downtown.

B. Lawrence thanked the HDC for meeting regularly and having an open forum for the residents to voice opinion. She did express concern about hosting too much housing development in the downtown. She feels strongly that the village should retain its current level of density and that other areas in the community are equally suited for growth.

**Procurement Officer** – K. Cheetham provided the Board with a draft Contract for Services with Frank Antonucci of Ipswich for procurement services. The Board reviewed the contract.

**ACTION:** D. Carey made a motion to approve the contract. B. Gisness seconded. All voted in favor.

**Downtown Amenities** – D. Carey asked the Board about their interest in funding the downtown amenities at the request of the Selectmen. He mentioned a list of ideas such as; benches, trash bins, flower boxes, seasonal lighting, and banners. K. Cheetham noted that the town manager did not recommend investing in items that require maintenance. She also asked at what point was the Board going to support some planning behind the investments. It is one thing to order 5 park benches and another to have a plan for where they will be located. R. Mitchell noted that the Board wasn't at the planning stage yet. One member asked who establishes the aesthetic appearance of these items – even benches have different styles. B. Lawrence added that she did not favor banners as they often draw attention to the telephone poles. She also stated that she was looking for the HDC to sponsor the planning effort for the downtown.

D. Carey added that the mission of the HDC was to support infrastructure such as the wastewater treatment system, sidewalks, traffic studies, etc. It is not necessarily for beautification projects. He stated that the merchants would like to see an investment in something as the meals tax has been collected for several years now.

The members of the HDC stated that their preference was to forward the 10% of last years' funding to the town, the Town Manager and Board of Selectmen, and for them to appropriate it to a project.

**Adjourn** – R. Mitchell made a motion to adjourn. A. Nickas seconded. All voted in favor.